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NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education
Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS/TEACHERS TO SUPPORT YOUTH FITNESS

VANCOUVER – As part of the ActNow BC initiative, the Province will make new tools available to parents and teachers to encourage children and youth to be more physically active, Education Minister Shirley Bond announced today.

"We need to do more to improve the health of B.C.'s citizens, and that begins with our children and youth," Bond said during a visit to Waverley elementary school. "Every move is a good move, and that's why we've developed these resources for parents and teachers."

The new ActNow BC parent and teacher resources include:

- Healthy Living for Families Guides – Every student will receive a booklet with tips and ideas on how to help children and youth be physically active and eat nutritiously. Three different booklets are aimed at parents of students in grades K-3, 4-7 and 8-9. A fourth guide is aimed at students in grades 10-12 to help them make their own healthy choices. The booklets will arrive in B.C. schools this week and can also be downloaded online at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/hsnetwork/.

- Health Matters teacher resources – These new learning resources contain materials that will help students learn more about active living and healthy eating. The resources will be aligned with the Health and Career Education (HCE) curricula for grades K-7, 8-9 and Planning 10. The resources have been piloted and tested for grades 8 to 10 and will be ready for implementation in September. Health Matters for kindergarten through Grade 7 will be field tested in this fall and ready for implementation in September 2008.

- Healthy Living Performance Standards – Over the next year, members of B.C.'s new Healthy Schools Network will work with the Province to develop provincial healthy living performance standards that will outline appropriate health knowledge for each grade level.

Recent studies show that one out of every four B.C. children aged 2-17 is overweight or obese. The number of overweight teens has doubled in the past 25 years and obesity cases have tripled.

"Daily physical activity is an important component to developing a healthy lifestyle," said Gordon Hogg, Minister of State for ActNow BC. "ActNow BC is about encouraging all British Columbians to form healthy lifestyle habits from our youth to our seniors."

These ActNow BC strategies help support the Province's Pacific Leadership Agenda by improving health for our citizens and renewing our public health care system.

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Other recently announced ActNow BC strategies to keep kids moving are:

- A public education campaign consisting of television, print and bus advertising aimed at children and youth to encourage them to get off the couch and add physical activity to their daily routines.

- An interactive website for children and youth containing information on healthy eating and physical activity. Children and youth will be able to explore various, simple activity options that they can try with friends or on their own.

"I'm convinced that the greatest threat to the future well-being of our kids lies in their deteriorating diets and their lack of adequate exercise, so I'm thrilled to be associated with Act Now, which is teaching our kids – and their parents – about the vital importance of eating a healthy diet and becoming more active," said Dr Art Hister.

To help promote healthy choices and lifestyles in children and youth, the Province also introduced legislation to ban tobacco use on school grounds and around buildings used for educational purposes, effective September 2007.

ActNow BC is a partnership-based cross-ministry health and wellness initiative that promotes healthy living choices to improve the quality of life for all British Columbians.

For more information, visit www.actnowbc.gov.bc.ca

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